

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6 - 11, 14 - 15, 18, 20 - 21, and 24 - 26 are pending. Claims 1, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 18, 20, and 24 - 26 have been amended. Claims 2- 5, 12 - 13, 16 - 17, 19, 22, and 23 have been cancelled. No new matter has been introduced. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In the April 8, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner identified that claims 14, 15, 18, 20 and 21 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 14, 15, 18, and 20 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 21 depends directly from claim 20. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the claims 14, 15, 18, 20, and 21 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 24 - 26 depend, directly or indirectly from claim 20. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claims 24 - 26 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the terms "first friction force," "second friction force," "third friction force," and "separation force." The Examiner also rejected the claims 5 - 8 and 23 -26 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, paragraph 2 for using these terms. Applicants have incorporated the limitations of claim 5, including the terms "first friction force" and "second friction force" into claim 1, as amended.

First, applicants respectfully submit that originally filed claims provide their own support. Further, the applicant respectfully submits that these terms find support in the

specification, in among other places, at page 11, lines 9 - 20 and page 11, line 21 - page 12, line 5. Although the exact term "first," "second," or "third" is not utilized, there is a discussion of friction forces for each of the hinges that resist rotation and that hinges have different friction force existing in the each direction . The term "separating force" is used as the in the specification and applicants have amended the claims to utilize this term rather than "separation force." Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, paragraph 2 should be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 - 12, 16 - 19, and 22 - 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,268,817 to Miyagawa et al. ("the Miyagawa reference"). The Examiner rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatenable over the Miyagawa reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,935 to Hawkins et al. ("the Hawkins reference"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, recites:

A portable computer configurable in a tablet configuration, a laptop configuration, and a closed configuration, said portable computer comprising:

a display unit having a display device and a back surface;
a base unit having a primary input device and a bottom surface;

and

a hinging assembly coupling said display unit to said base unit, said hinging assembly having a first hinge with a first axis of rotation and a second hinge with a second axis of rotation, wherein said back surface of said display unit is in contact with said bottom surface of said base unit when said portable computer is in said tablet mode,

said primary input device and said display device are between said back surface of said display unit and said bottom surface of said base unit when said portable computer is in said closed configuration,

one of said first hinge and said second hinge is rotated to reconfigure said portable computer between said closed configuration and said laptop configuration,

said first hinge and said second hinge are rotated to reconfigure said portable computer between said closed configuration and said tablet configuration, and

a first friction force resists rotation of said first hinge about said first axis of rotation, a second friction force resists rotation of said second hinge about said second axis of rotation, and said first friction force is of a smaller magnitude than said second friction force.

The Miyagawa reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the portable computer of claim 1, as amended. The Examiner states that the Miyagawa reference discloses the invention as claimed in claim 1 in, for example, Figs. 5 - 7D, and column 5, line 16 - col. 6, line 65. (*Office Action, page 5*). Specifically, the Miyagawa reference discloses that hinge units 31 and 33 set a range of the upper cover and the main body case. Thus, when a keyboard is used, akin to a laptop mode, a latch mechanism is arranged on, for example, the front end of the main body case for fixing the upper cover to oppose the main body case. This is disengaged which sets the hinge unit 33 in a neutral state. The upper cover is lifted up about a point A of the hinge unit in a state wherein the surface provided with the keyboard of the main body faces up.

Fig. 7C shows a setup state wherein the display device 23 is used for handwriting without using the keyboard 28. When only the display device is used the hinge unit 31 is opened through 180 degrees thus unlocking the hinge unit 33. When the hinge unit is pivoted along a circular path about a point B, the main body case 29 and the upper cover 25 overlap each other so that the back surface of the main body case faces the back surface of the upper cover. (*Miyagawa, col. 6, lines 5 - 55*).

This is not the same as a portable computer including a hinging assembly having a first hinge and a second hinge, wherein **a first friction force resists rotation of said first hinge about said first axis of rotation, a second friction force resists rotation of said second hinge about said second axis of rotation, and said first friction**

force is of a smaller magnitude than said second friction force. The Miyagawa reference is not found to disclose friction forces and specifically does not disclose that the first friction force is of a smaller magnitude than that of the second friction force. Instead, the Miyagawa reference discloses that the first hinge rotates after a latch mechanism is disengaged and that the second hinge 33 does not rotate until it is unlocked by the first hinge, i.e., hinge unit 31, opening through 180°. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 distinguishes over the Miyagawa reference.

Claims 6 -11 depend, directly or indirectly, on independent claim 1, as amended. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6 -11 distinguish over the Miyagawa reference for the same reasons as discussed above in regard to claim 1, as amended.

Claim 6 further distinguishes over the Miyagawa reference. Claim 6, as amended, recites:

The portable computer according to claim 1, wherein a separating force applied to separate said display unit from said base unit causes said first hinge to rotate until an angle of rotation of said first hinge equals a maximum angle of rotation associated with said first hinge **and the second hinge does not rotate and a larger magnitude application of said separating force causes said second hinge to rotate, wherein the portable computer does not include a latching mechanism and the first hinge and the second hinge do not include a locking mechanism.**

The Miyagawa reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the portable computer of claim 6. The Miyagawa reference does not discuss that a larger magnitude application of said separating causes the second hinge to move. Further, the Miyagawa reference includes both a latching mechanism and a locking mechanism.

This is the opposite of claim 6's portable computer, which does not include a latching mechanism or a locking mechanism. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that

claim 6 distinguishes over the Miyagawa reference.

Claim 7 further distinguishes over the Miyagawa reference. Claim 7, as amended, recites:

The portable computer according to claim 1, wherein said first friction force resists rotation of said first hinge in a first direction and a **third friction force resists rotation of said first hinge in a second direction opposite to said first direction, said third friction force having a greater magnitude than both said first friction force and said second friction force, which allows the first hinge to rotate first when the portable computer is opened to said laptop configuration from said closed configuration and the first hinge to rotate second when the portable computer is changed from said laptop configuration to said closed configuration.**

The Miyagawa reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the portable computer of claim 7, as amended. The Miyagawa reference does not disclose that a third friction force is present in a direction opposite to said first directions and the third friction force has a greater magnitude than both of the first friction force and said second friction force. There is no disclosure of a friction force opposite to the first friction force. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claim 7 distinguishes over the Miyagawa reference.

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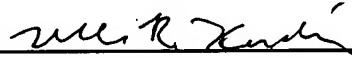
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Applicants believe that the claims are in condition for allowance, and a favorable action is respectfully requested. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call either of the undersigned attorneys at the Los Angeles telephone number (213) 488-7100 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance should the Examiner believe that such a telephone conference would advance prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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